



blm - alaska

frontiers

Issue 5 July 1987

No appeal; BLM starts four EISs on placers

BLM will not appeal U.S. District Court Judge James von der Heydt's decision that EISs must be written on the cumulative impacts of **placer mining** on not just one stream but on four.

According to State Director Mike Penfold, "BLM will prepare the cumulative impact EISs and will follow the judge's instructions to assess the cumulative impacts regardless of whether they occur on federal, state or private land." The impact statements will also cover the impacts of mining on subsistence uses in those drainages.

Cumulative impact, according to CEQ regs, means "the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions."

"We expect to have a plan of study ready and a notice of intent and request for public information and comment by about June 20," said team leader Dick Dworsky.

The judge ruled on May 14 that mining operations must shut down at the end of this season until BLM prepares an EIS covering the cumulative impacts of mining operations on Birch Creek. In this latest ruling he further required BLM to address cumulative impacts on the Fortymile River, Beaver Creek and several rivers draining into the Minto Flats area northwest of Fairbanks.



These two cyclists pedalled the entire Denali Highway. They reported great gas mileage.

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EPA report may mean new woes for oil

New economic woes may threaten the oil and gas industries in Alaska, depending on the findings of a waste management study report due to be released to Congress in December. The report, being prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency, addresses waste management; but a key issue will be whether "exempt" wastes will be regulated as hazardous wastes.

Drilling fluids, produced water and other wastes associated with oil and gas exploration, development and production are now exempt from hazardous waste management, as provided by amendments of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. If EPA's report recommends that these wastes be treated as hazardous wastes, the compliance costs would be astronomical for the oil and gas industries.

John Catlin, BLM environmental scientist assisting EPA with the study, says, "There are no approved hazardous waste sites in Alaska so the wastes would have to be transported to the nearest sites located in Arlington, Va., Washington, D.C., or Chicago. For Alaska, oil industry waste management would become a multi-million dollar expense."

Not only would the industries have to comply with federal hazardous waste regulations but also with any state-imposed regulations.

For example, the disposal of drilling muds and cuttings under newly-proposed state regulations could cost the Alaska oil industry \$900 million. By EPA standards drilling muds and waters are not hazardous wastes, but the proposed state regulations treat them as such. ARCO Alaska, Inc., estimates costs to comply with the state's solid waste management regulations would be an initial \$30 million and \$20 million in annual drilling costs.

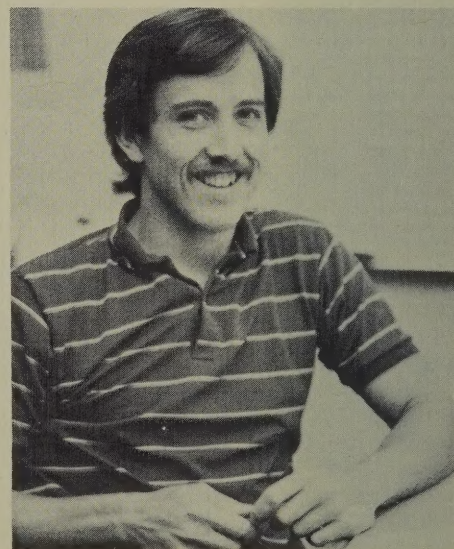
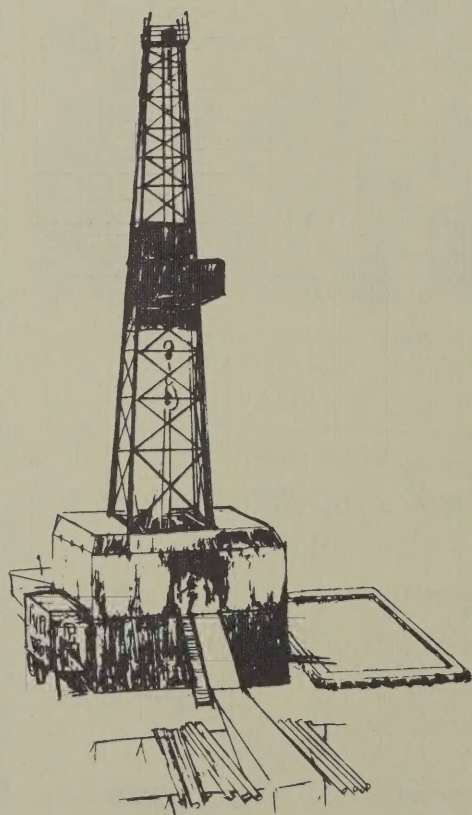
The EPA report will show the volume of waste produced annually by the oil and gas industry and the present disposal practices. It will evaluate the risks of surface runoffs to humans and the environment and will include documented cases proving the dangers of surface runoff to humans and the environment. It will present alternatives to current disposal methods, the costs of those alternatives and their impacts on the exploration, development and production of crude oil, natural gas or geothermal energy.

The EPA was required by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to conduct a waste management study for Congress by October 1982. When it failed to do so, EPA was sued by the Alaska Center for the Environment in August 1985. In complying with a consent order, the EPA was originally to have a draft report to the Congress by April and a final report by August. Recently EPA was granted a court extension making the draft report due in August and final report in December. This extension will allow for more field sampling.

Most of the report is being done by seven contractors, and the extension enables them to sample four more sites so a more extensive data base can be developed.

After the final report EPA will solicit public comment for six months. Congress is scheduled to make a determination by June 1988 as to whether oil and gas waste should be regulated as hazardous waste.

—DA



Detailed to EPA's Washington, D.C., office for several weeks, John Catlin is being tapped for his Alaska minerals expertise. A member of the BLM Alaska Mineral Resources staff, he is writing the Alaska portion of the report.



The miners moved their equipment along the frozen surface of Birch Creek to avoid harming the vegetation.

First miners get access to claims inside national conservation area

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, except when it crosses fragile tundra vegetation and the traveler is a miner with heavy equipment. In that case Bureau of Land Management staff must work with the miner to consider the terrain and devise an access route that will cause the least impact on the environment.

In the case of John and Mark Ringstad, careful planning paid off. On March 31, after aerial surveillance, onsite inspection, and extensive consultation and coordination, BLM issued the access authorization. With that, the Ringstads' company became the first mining operation in Alaska to receive authorized access to claims inside a national conservation area. The authorization allowed the Fairbanks-based gold miners to go into the Steese National Conservation Area over snow cover and river ice to reach the claims before spring thaw.

From Circle City their equipment was routed to Harrison Creek. Then the D-8 cat hauling the trackster-mounted drill traveled slowly along the frozen surface of Birch Creek and a branch stream to the site. By April 8 it was all finished, and the mining exploration party was on site at the claims ready for the season's work.

"The law clearly recognizes the need for access to inholdings within conservation units, as well as through conservation units to adjacent lands,"

said Keith Woodworth, who is responsible for the Steese-White Mountains District's 3809 surface management program.

After the Ringstads submitted a plan of operations detailing their proposed access and exploration, BLM studied and evaluated potential impacts to the area, assuring that the move and exploration would meet requirements of surface management regulations, special concerns for the conservation area, and other laws.

Working closely with the Ringstads, BLM reached a mutually agreed-upon alternative that would allow the company to reach the inholdings with minimal disturbance to the environment. Based on the environmental analysis, BLM decided an environmental impact statement was not required.

Woodworth and his staff also coordinated with the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, the Alaska Miners Association, the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Federal Affairs, and the transportation committee of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce. A legal notice was published in a local newspaper.

"BLM staff in the district asked for and received as much input as possible before the final decision was made," said Don Runberg, manager of the Steese/White Mountains District.

—SDW

Nat'l advisers come to tour Alaska BLM

The National Public Lands Advisory Council, a 21-member citizens' group which advises the Bureau of Land Management, convenes in Alaska June 15-19 for a field tour and formal meeting. The field tour begins June 15 in Fairbanks and will include a survey of the utility corridor and other BLM-managed lands. On Friday, June 19, the formal meeting will be in the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel.

Comprised of persons from 13 western states where the BLM manages lands, the council provides the agency with a spectrum of public perspective about various land management issues and policies. It meets two or three times a year to provide recommendations on current issues.

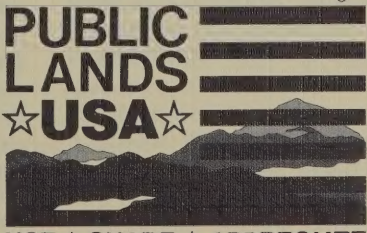
Paula Easley, one of two Alaskans on the council, has worked diligently to bring the group to Alaska to learn firsthand about such issues as access, transportation corridors, energy development and conveyance.

In addition to the council members, the tour group will include BLM Director Robert Burford, Deputy Director David O'Neal, Special Assistant David Tidwell, and Director of External Affairs Elizabeth Morris.

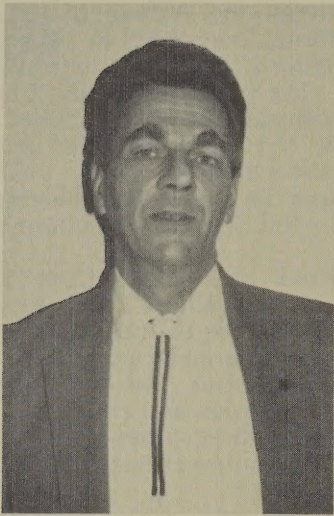
The public is invited to the formal meeting and is welcome to address the council. Anyone wishing to do so is requested to notify the Office of Public Affairs in advance and to submit a copy of his or her remarks for the record to that office: BLM Public Affairs, 701 C Street, Box 13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513.

—JS

Bureau of Land Management 

**PUBLIC
LANDS
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USE ★ SHARE ★ APPRECIATE

Southern Council brings up those hot issues for you



**Bob Arwezon -
Public-at-Large**

Having served with the Anchorage District Advisory Council since its inception, Bob Arwezon is now chairperson of the Southern Alaska Advisory Council. He believes many important decisions are yet to be made concerning BLM lands. Easement identification is one issue he'd like the council to tackle.

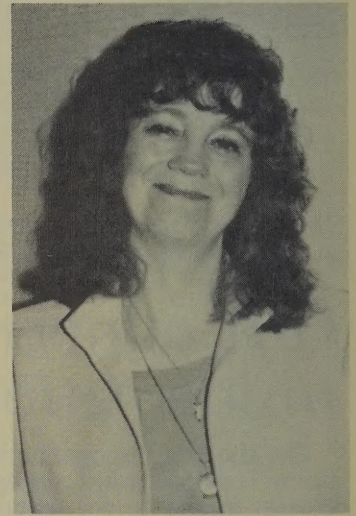
A graduate of Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, Arwezon has a bachelor's degree in economics with a minor in education. He is treasurer of the Legislative and Governmental Affairs Committee for the Alaska Association of Realtors. A former dog-musher, Arwezon has lived in Anchorage for the past 25 years and makes his living as a realtor.

In the previous issue of FRONTIERS, members of the Northern Alaska Advisory Council were profiled. In this issue we take a look at the 10 individuals who comprise the Southern Alaska Advisory Council. They advise Anchorage District Manager John Rumps and Glennallen District Manager Gene Terland on BLM issues occurring in the southern half of Alaska.

Meeting several times a year, the council insures public involvement and monitoring of BLM programs.

Questions about the Southern Advisory Council should be addressed to the BLM Public Affairs Office, Alaska State Office, 701 C Street, Box 13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513.

—DA



**Sally Jones Suddock -
Public-at-Large**

Suddock, like Arwezon, is one of the Anchorage District Advisory Council's original members. Suddock splits her responsibilities as co-owner of a marketing consultant business with those as newly appointed editor of the Journal of Commerce. She has a degree in journalism.

Working for the Environmental Protection Agency, being the coastal zone management program coordinator and researching issues such as d-2 legislation, mineral regulation, hydro-electric power and winter recreation studies are evidence of her commitment to natural resource issues. A self-claimed workaholic, Suddock devotes some of her free time to Intervention Ministries Board — a group dedicated to promoting drug and alcohol awareness. Suddock advocates a consensus solution to land management issues.



**Anne Brown - Non-
Renewable Resources**

Brown, a biologist/chemist, now works as an environmental scientist on ANWR issues for Standard Alaska Production Company. She also has experience with coastal zone management, petroleum industry operations and land management issues. Brown's past work experience includes resource work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Municipality of Anchorage.

She is active in Huffman/O'Malley Community Council meetings and is a member of HALO (Hillside Area Land Owners).



June Degnan - Recreation

Land use planner for the Unalakleet Native Corporation, Degnan considers herself a Native rights activist inspired by her father, a champion of Native causes.

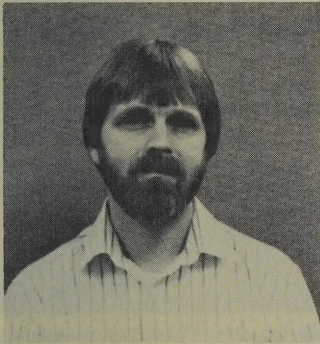
She uses her knowledge of rural and urban lifestyles and land use patterns when networking planning information with government agencies.

Degnan has a bachelor's degree in psychology and education and a master's degree in public administration. She is a member of the Bering Straits Native Corporation, the American Planning Association and the International Right-of-Way Association.

James Glaspell - Renewable Resources

Owner of Resources Analysts, Glaspell is involved in coastal management and environmental planning and consulting. His experience includes work on two coastal management plans, the proposed ANGTS pipeline, TAPS, the Kuparuk Oil Pipeline and mining impacts in the Wulik and Kivalina River drainages.

He has a bachelor's degree in forest technology and a master's in wildlife management from the Pennsylvania State University.



Dennis Bromley - Wildlife

Former biologist for several federal agencies, Bromley teaches science at Barlett High School. Most of his interests and activities reflect his concern for wildlife. He helps teach Audubon bird classes and is a member of the Safari Club and Alaska Science Teachers Association. When he



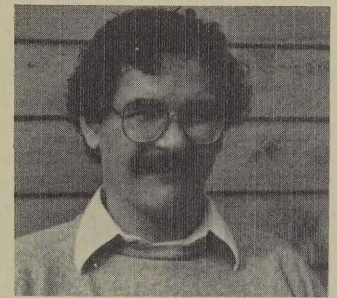
isn't flying to Africa to do some big game hunting, he's training retrievers, fishing or hiking.

Bromley, who has a masters degree in wildlife and biology, says the Council's wildlife category is well represented because of his concern for BLM and wildlife issues.

Steve Cypra - Elected Official

Cypra, Matanuska-Susitna assemblyman, is the newest member of the council. Nowadays he spends most of his time on assembly committee work and helping his wife in her graphics business. He was instrumental in starting the Mat-Su borough tourism program and is helping to develop the recreation potential of Hatcher Pass.

Cypra looks forward to learning more about federal land management techniques with the council, since most of his work has been with local and state governments.

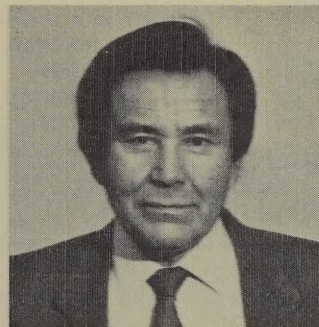


Hope Nelson - Renewable Resources

Nelson returns to the council after a brief absence. A political consultant, she is extremely active in the Republican Party, is president of the Alaska Federation of Republican Women's Club, and is

chairperson of the nonpartisan Anchorage Women's FREE Committee.

She advocates the working of industry and environment for wise development, which in turn benefits our nation. She attended the University of Denver.



Roy Ewan - Transportation/Rights-of-Way

Ewan is the president of the AHTNA Native Corporation and a life-long resident of the Copper River basin. Active in ANCSA and ANILCA issues for many years, he is a former member of the Alaska Native Claims Appeal Board. He's worked in the past with the Alaska Native Foundation and Ruralcap and is deeply committed to the development and identification of easements and rights-of-way in the Copper Basin area.



Emma Walton - Public-at-Large

As science coordinator for the Anchorage School District for the past 13 years, Walton has been involved with the council in integrating land management issues with those of education. She holds a doctorate in education.

She has had a long, productive association with BLM as co-coordinator of Outdoor Week, an environmental education program conducted annually by the Anchorage School District and BLM.

Tired of crowded roads? Drive Denali

Although it was once the original travel route to Denali National Park, the Denali Highway is now overlooked by most tourists. Instead, they drive the new Parks Highway because it's the quickest way to Mount McKinley. Yet the slower-paced Denali rewards the traveler with outstanding scenery, better chances to view wildlife, and best of all, glimpses of Alaska as it used to be — wilderness in all directions.

The Denali is serendipity country where one can still be surprised by an unanticipated vista, an unexpected wildlife sighting or an unplanned adventure along an unmarked trail — the experiences that make for the most memorable of vacations.

This gravel road, which runs 135 miles east-west between Cantwell on the Parks Highway and Paxson on the Richardson Highway, is located about half way between Fairbanks and Anchorage. Travelers starting out from either city can easily go across the Denali Highway as part of a loop trip that includes Denali National Park. From Anchorage the loop is about 600 miles; from Fairbanks it is about 148 miles.

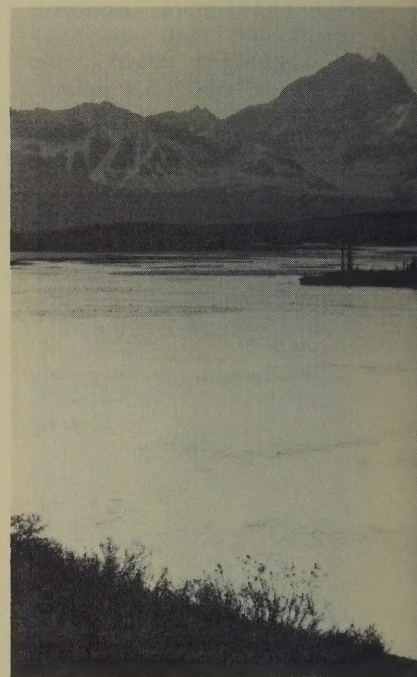
Most of the land traversed by the Denali Highway is administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM has provided three camping areas and several hiking trails.

Much of the highway is above timberline, offering vistas of Mt. McKinley from the west end, of the Wrangell Mountains from the east end, and of the numerous peaks of the Alaska Range to the north. The highway is the highest road in Alaska as it crosses Maclaren summit at 4,086 feet.

Travelers who have an interest in landscape features will find a variety of glacial features present all along the highway, including pingos, moraines, eskers, kettle lakes and braided streams. Maclaren Glacier can also be seen from the Denali Highway. It is best observed at Milepost 43, where it is 16 miles distant.

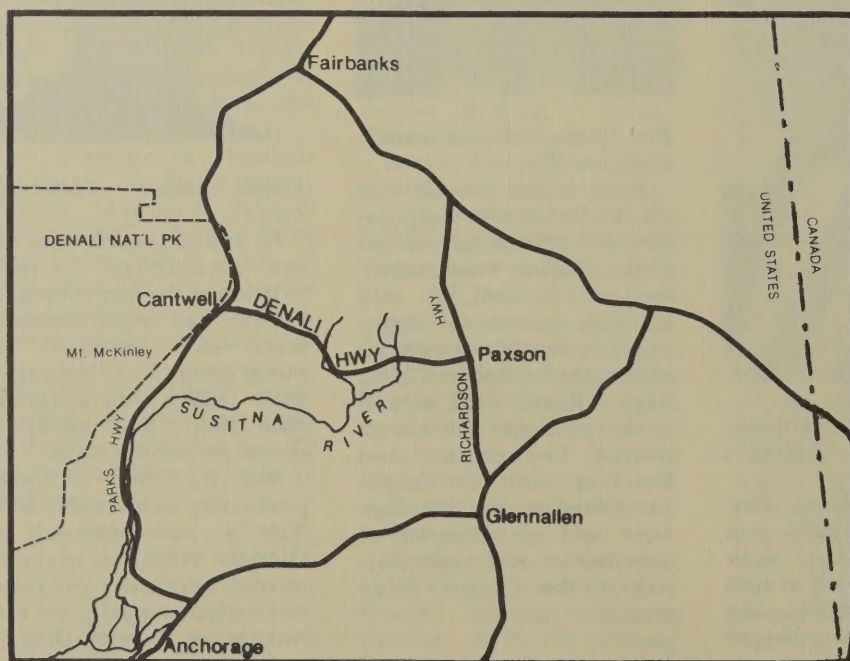
Seven of the nine ecosystems of Alaska are represented along this highway. The dominant vegetation types include tundra, high brush, bog-muskeg and spruce-poplar forest. This vegetative variety means that there is also a diversity of animal habitat, particularly where there is an "edge" between vegetation types.

Wildlife observation all along the highway is a popular summer visitor pastime. Animals one might see are caribou, moose, black and grizzly bears, Dall sheep, ptarmigans, bald eagles, trumpeter swans and a several kinds of waterfowl.



Along the Susitna, evening is an

*The Denali is so
where one can see
unplanned adventures that make*



Hunters and fishermen also find prime locations in the area. During the summer, the major rivers of the area such as the Maclaren, Susitna and Nenana transport vast quantities of silt from the glaciers at their headwaters. This makes fish hard to catch. However, there is good fishing in lakes away from the road that are accessible by foot or air. One spot that's popular for fishing is the Tangle Lakes, which contain lake trout and grayling. Salmon are found only in the Gulkana River near Paxson.

This region was once a rich hunting ground for aboriginal peoples, and a portion of the Denali country has been designated as a national archeological district.

Denali Highway



Excellent time to watch for wildlife.

Denali country
be surprised by
adventures—experi-
ence fun.

Indoor accommodations are few and far between, but the area is adequately served by roadhouses — Alaska's original stopover points that offer lodging, restaurant, gasoline and supplies under one roof. Roadhouses are good places to share a cup of coffee on a rainy afternoon or chat with an Alaskan sourdough.

While there are several developed campgrounds along the highway, some people prefer the freedom of roadside camping.

Little is written about the Denali Highway, and there are few signs along the way. But those who take the time to travel here will not be disappointed.

— EB

TRAILS

Trails are maintained on an irregular basis. Visitors should not expect to find signs; it is advisable to carry topographic maps. Many trails cross low areas that are wet during the summer. Rubber boots are recommended.

Swede Lake Trail, mile 17

A 13-mile-long trail of medium difficulty for hikers and horse packers. The trail goes past Swede Lake to the Middle Fork of the Gulkana River. Be alert for grizzly bears.

Glacier Lake Trail, mile 30.5

This trail crosses a flat, marshy valley to reach Glacier Lake, two miles distant. There are two streams and a deep marsh enroute, making this a difficult trail. Fishing is for grayling and lake trout.

Butte Lake Trail, mile 93.8

This 4.5-mile trail crosses bogs and marshes to reach Butte Lake. Blueberries, cranberries and bearberries are abundant when in season. Fishing is for grayling and lake trout.

Brushkana Creek Trail, mile 104.5

This two-mile loop trail begins and ends at Brushkana Creek Campground. It follows the creek for one mile and provides access for grayling fishing.

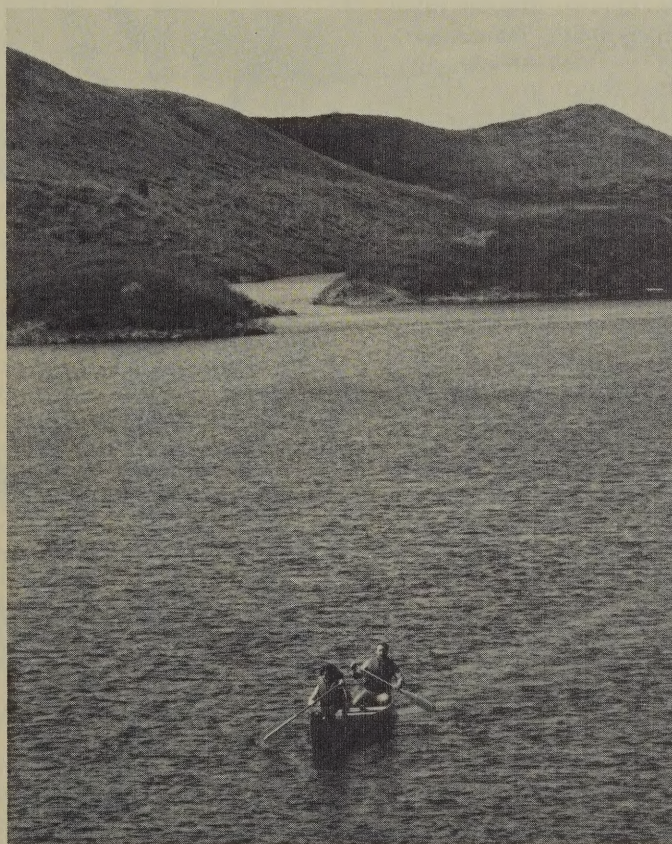
CAMPGROUNDS

Tangle Lakes Campground, mile 21.5
Fourteen sites, put-in for Delta National Wild and Scenic River.

Tangle River Campground, mile 21.7
Seven sites, boat ramp.

Brushkana Campground, mile 104.3
Seventeen sites and a group picnic shelter

All campgrounds are on a first-come, first-served basis. No reservations are accepted. Campgrounds are generally open from June to October, but the season of use can vary from year to year, depending on weather conditions.



The Tangle Lakes offer fishing and canoeing.

Agencies plan 'prescribed' burns to spur growth of wildlife habitat

Normally a BLM firefighter's job is to put out wildfires. This summer, however, Alaska Fire Service firefighters will be igniting some very carefully planned prescribed burns in the White Mountains National Recreation Area and in the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. BLM's Alaska Fire Service (AFS) and the state Division of Forestry will provide the people and the expertise for this specialized job. "Prescribed" burning means deliberately starting a fire, and it is an important tool for managing the land.

There are two main reasons why a land manager decides to burn a tract of land.

Improving wildlife habitat

The first reason is to enhance wildlife habitat. Many animal species prefer an area where there are many different kinds of vegetation. A junction of different types of vegetation is referred to as an "edge habitat." A mosaic of grasses, willows, lakes, deciduous and evergreen trees lets animals nest, hide and eat within one area. A variety of species of animals can use this kind of habitat. As time goes on, conifers tend to take over an area. They shade the ground so that grasses, shrubs and young deciduous trees cannot grow. There is little food for browsing animals such as moose and no grassy nesting areas for birds. Burning these areas allows grasses, willows and young birches and aspens to grow, providing food for moose and birds.

The two prescribed burns scheduled for the White Mountains this summer will be done to improve wildlife habitat, especially moose habitat. The proposed burn areas are located in the upper tributaries of Beaver Creek National Wild and Scenic River but out of sight of people floating on Beaver Creek. One is an 11,500-acre area on upper O'Brien Creek and the other is a 9,000-acre area in the upper Bear and Quartz creeks drainage.

Both of these areas are surrounded by bare rock on three sides, so the firefighters will be able to contain the fire easily. AFS will provide the trained suppression personnel for the holding crew, the folks who see that the fire stays within the specified area.

BLM wildlife biologist Bruce Durtsche, who has been studying moose in this area for several years and who proposed the burns, will monitor changes in moose distribution and use patterns in future years.

Improving habitat is also the goal of a 10,000-acre burn the AFS will conduct this summer on the Fish and Wildlife Service's Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. The area currently has streams, lakes and spruce thickets. Burning the evergreens will allow edible plants such as willows, aspens, birches, grasses and berries to grow. The streams and lakes will interrupt the flames and create the desired mosaic of vegetation types.

Planning for fires

No prescribed burn, however, is ever undertaken until it has been very carefully researched and planned. Before a land manager decides to burn a particular area, an environmental assessment is prepared. The manager also must make decisions about whether just the plants above ground should be destroyed or the roots also and what climatic conditions should be present when the fire is started, based on the objectives of the burn. Another factor managers consider is the time of year when the area might be critical to a species, such as a nesting or calving area in spring, a fall migration route or a critical wintering area.

The "burn boss" is in charge of the burn and provides the expertise in fire behavior needed to determine what burn pattern, method of starting and direction of burn is best to accomplish the goal.

The burn boss for the prescribed burns planned for the White Mountains area is Brian Fox, fire control officer for AFS's Circle Hot Springs Zone. When Fox flew out to inspect the sites, he identified places where crews should be located to control the fire, the number of people needed and starting points for the fire.

Managers try to pick a day between weather fronts when the winds are calm and another storm front might bring rain in a few days to wet down the area after the burn. The burn boss may set up a remote automatic weather station to automatically report rainfall in the area. Wind direction is one of the most critical parameters.

When a day comes when all the parameters are met, the crew will start the fire; but if there is heavy wildfire activity in other places at the same time and the crews are busy, the prescribed burn may have to be postponed.

The Alaska Fire Service also provides support to agencies that want to initiate a prescribed fire on their own lands.





An Alaska Fire Service firefighter uses a drip torch to ignite a prescribed burn, while another holds a spruce bough ready to beat out any fire that doesn't go in the right direction.

Hazard Reduction

The second reason for a prescribed burn is to reduce fire hazards posed by the accumulation of dried plant materials. In some areas, dense vegetation creates excellent fuel for a wildfire and makes it hard to control a fire once it gets started. This problem is typical on the Kenai Peninsula where fires have been aggressively attacked for years because of the number of people living in the area. In such areas prescribed burns may be used to reduce or control the severity of future fires by creating a line of burned land between the heavy trees and the community.

Fire Management Zones

Deliberately starting fires is not the only option for an area that managers feel needs to be burned. Under the interagency fire management plans developed by land managers from several agencies, areas of land are given different levels of protection. Protection status is a determination of what action will be taken in case a fire starts in that area.

A fire on an area with "critical" protection status would be immediately and aggressively attacked to protect life or property. On the other end of the scale is "limited" protection. In an area with limited protection status, a fire would simply be monitored to be sure it didn't move into another area with a higher protection status. In these areas managers will not start fires, but

if one starts they will not take action to put it out. This results in both habitat improvement and fuel hazard reduction without spending a lot of the taxpayer's money. Since 1983, some 500,000 acres of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) land have burned in this way, according to Red Sheldon, FWS regional fire management coordinator.

Land managers now recognize that fire has an important role in the natural environment and that there are many options available in addition to full suppression. As their knowledge increases, the plants, animals and people associated with our public lands will continue to share in the benefits of increasingly sophisticated fire management procedures.

—SS

Survey areas are approved for year 1990

Proposed survey areas for 1990 have now been approved. BLM chose the areas based on the Patent Plan Process that was initiated in April 1985.

Nominations were received from Native corporations, the state of Alaska and other survey users by March 1986. BLM then used the selection criteria that the user groups and the Alaska Land Use Council approved in 1985 in order to evaluate and prioritize the nominations. The Interagency Cadastral Coordination Council (ICCC) reviewed the proposed schedule last December. The number of projects chosen for survey was limited by the budget expected to be allocated by Congress.

The eleven projects are shown on the adjacent map.

Proposed 1990 Survey Priorities

1. Chugach East
2. Chistochina
3. 14(c) selections (statewide)
4. Emmonak
5. Cantwell
6. Kotzebue
7. Tanana
8. Minto
9. Chalkyitsik
10. Ketchikan
11. Seward Peninsula

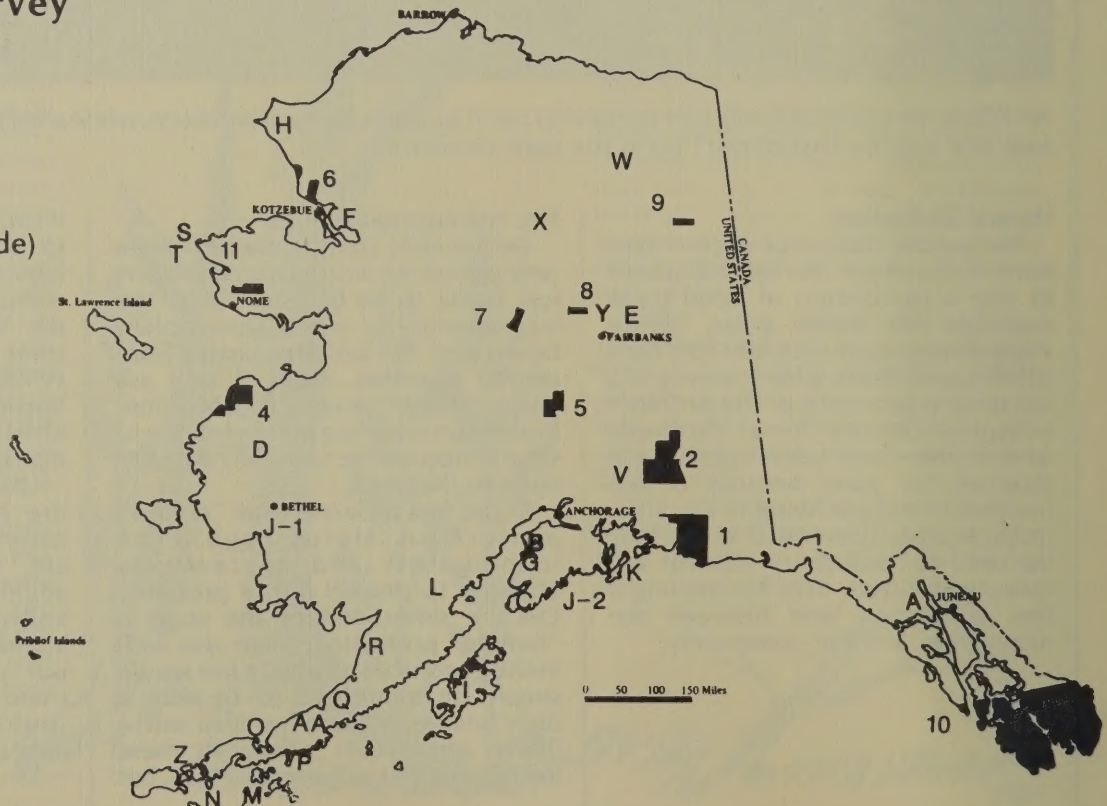
BLM Land Conveyance Progress Report MARCH 31, 1987

NATIVE CORPORATIONS

Land conveyed (patent & interim conveyance)	34,502,832 acres
211 village corporations	
12 regional corporations	
5 former reserves	
Acreage conveyed but not included above	653,256 acres
Draft decisions completed awaiting corporation review or final preparation for publication	83,895 acres
Decisions published, appeal period not ended, or not conveyed for other reasons (28 cases)	173,629 acres
Draft decisions awaiting final action (8 cases)	83,895 acres

STATE OF ALASKA

	Acres TA'd	Acres Patented	Total Acres
Statehood Grants	53,294,700	28,375,300	81,670,000
Mental Health Grants	176,634	829,250	1,005,884
Terms and Conditions Act of 1976	882,729	5,661	888,390
TOTAL ACRES	54,354,063	29,210,211	83,564,274



Submerged lands audit finds underselected villages

BLM's recently completed submerged lands audit identified 17 ANCSA village corporations that are apparently underselected. The audit is a result of the 1983 Submerged Lands Act, which directed that non-navigable lakes larger than 50 acres or riverbeds more than three chains wide are not chargeable against corporation entitlements.

"Up to now, corporations have preferred that BLM continue conveying land while doing work on submerged lands as time allowed. However, now that some corporations are close to receiving their full entitlement, we needed to take a closer look at final figures," said audit project manager Helen Burleson. "The audit took about three and a half months for us to look at more than 2,000 townships involving village

corporation selections," she said.

In order to meet deadlines for the report, it was not possible to review each and every township affected by state or regional corporation selections. Instead, a computer-generated random sample of 400 townships was used to estimate calculations. "The state of Alaska used a slightly different methodology but came up with similar numbers and percentages," said Burleson. "We've also talked to some of the regional corporations, and they seem to be satisfied with what we have estimated."

As a result of the study, BLM now knows where the underselected villages are and will be able to work with the villages to find other lands available for selection.

Gulkana ruling stacks up work of conveyance

Additional costs and time delays in some conveyances are expected as one result of the recent decision by the U.S. District Court which ordered BLM to reevaluate its methodology for determining the navigability of water bodies in Alaska.

The decision, announced last April, will likely be appealed by one or more Native corporations. As BLM FRONTIERS went to press, the Interior Department was still considering whether to appeal the decision.

A major issue in the case involves the size of boat to be used as a standard for determining the navigability of a particular water body. Up to now, BLM had been using a propeller-driven 18-foot boat that could transport at least a half-ton of cargo. BLM also determined that such crafts as airboats and inflatable rafts were used for recreational purposes rather than commerce.

The court broadened this interpretation and recognized riverboats, skiffs and lake boats 16 to 24 feet long, canoes 15 to 19 feet long and inflatable rafts. The court did not specify any one craft as determinative of the Gulkana's navigability but referred to their use collectively as evidence of the river's capacity to transport people or goods. In general, one can conclude that the court regarded the use of any craft larger than a one-person kayak as determinative of navigability.

If the decision stands, all navigability determinations made to date will have to be reevaluated, and BLM will likely discover that there are more navigable rivers and streams than originally thought. The BLM will not charge the corporations or the state for the submerged lands of navigable waters regardless of the fact that the interim conveyance or tentative approval purported to include the beds of the rivers and streams. Most landlocked lakes less than 50 acres will likely be determined nonnavigable primarily because they are inaccessible by water. This will most likely be done as lands are reviewed prior to preparation of the survey plat.

—EB

1987 FIELD SURVEY PROJECTS

MAP KEY	WINDOW NUMBER	NAME	TYPE OF SURVEY
A	* 769	Shee/Atica	R
B	1551	N. Kenai	R&N
C	1550	Seldovia	R&N
D	* 919	Pilot Station	N
E	* 1543	Chena	R&N
F	* 1646	Selawik	N
G	824	S. Kenai	R&N
H	* 1334	Point Hope	N
I	* 1570	Kodiak	R&N
J-1		Tuntutuliak	T
J-2	662	Nuka Bay	R
K	1338	Montague Island	R
L	1247	Pedro Bay	N
M	1309	Unga/Sand Point	N
N	1584	Cold Bay	R&N
O	1175	Nelson Lagoon	N
P	1683	Perryville	N
Q	1632	Pilot Pt/Ugashik	N
R	2038	Egegik	N
S	2032	Wales & Hud	N
T	2040	Diomedes	N
V	1627	Lake Louise	N
W	250	Itkilik River	N
X	2060	Hughes	N
Y	237	Livengood	N
Z	* 1772	False Pass	N
AA	* 1677	Port Heiden	N

* Survey performed for BLM by private contractor

Type of Survey:

R - Rectangular

N - Native Allotment

T - Townsite

Recently arrived as new BLM Associate State Director is Les Rosenkrance. No stranger to Alaska, Les worked for BLM from 1974 as fire management officer for the Peninsula Resource Area and was manager of the Fortymile area at Tok. After a stint with the Alaska Programs Staff in Washington, Rosenkrance became District Manager in Safford, Arizona. He arrived in Anchorage this spring just in time to see the fruition of a popular event he originated in 1975, Outdoor Week, the spring treat BLM sponsors every year for Anchorage school children.

Two key BLM managers have retired, and another has accepted a new position in Washington, D.C. Long-time Alaskan Sal DeLeonardis, who has represented BLM with the Alaska Land Use Council since 1983, retired in May after 23 years with BLM, 31 in Federal service. He first came to Alaska in 1950 to study for his M.S. in wildlife management at the University of Alaska. During his career he worked in Kotzebue for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, served as first land selection officer for the state of Alaska, then became BLM's first wildlife biologist in Alaska. In 1978 he became chief of planning and environmental coordination.

George Gurr, Chief of Public Affairs since 1981, also retired in May. Gurr had worked for BLM since 1956, in a career that covered a lot of ground (He served in D.C., Arabia and Oregon as well as Alaska). He is noted for his work with Johnny Horizon, a character created in the mid-70s to foster environmental responsibility.

Reed Smith, BLM Deputy State Director for Mineral Resources, leaves for Washington in June. He has been named chief of the division of mining law and saleable minerals.

▽
The Utility Corridor draft management plan and EIS is being reviewed internally, and is expected to be distributed to the public by August 17, according to Dave Ruppert, project leader for BLM. Wilderness hearings, public meetings and 810 subsistence hearings will be held about 30 days after the draft is published, in early October.

▽
BLM recently sponsored a meeting among state and federal agencies on RS 2477 and the process the state will use to assert jurisdiction over certain rights-of-way across federal public lands. RS 2477 is an old federal access law that has been a source of controversy in recent years as BLM and the state seek to interpret it. It is unique among the many other laws that provide access across federal lands in that it requires no action on the part of federal agencies.

A draft environmental impact statement for the Trans-Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline is slated for release in early October. The EIS is being prepared under contract for the Bureau of Land Management and Army Corps of Engineers by Harding Lawson Associates. Yukon Pacific Corporation, the firm seeking to build the pipeline, has agreed to postpone the EIS's release until the Economic Regulatory Administration has evaluated the national residual environmental effects (primarily air quality and solid waste disposal). These findings will be included in the EIS.

BLM and the Corps of Engineers are requesting the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to be a cooperator in the development of the EIS. FERC is responsible for the siting, safety and environmental aspects of the gas liquefaction plant in Valdez.

▽
The Northern Advisory Council, a group of private citizens who advise BLM district managers for the northern part of Alaska, will tour the Dalton Highway in July to get a first-hand look at places involved in BLM issues.



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